

Storms
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DUXBURY HELPING DUXBURY

Reaching out

Duxbury, Mass., residents donate to relief efforts in sister town of Duxbury, Vt.

By Kathryn Koch
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DUXBURY - With homeowners in Duxbury, Vt., struggling to recover from Tropical Storm Irene, Duxbury, Mass., residents have reached out to help flood victims.

Initiated by Dave Hannon, whose parents, Bill and Eunice, live in Duxbury, Mass., and who married his wife, Doris Chow-Hannon, in Vermont, the Duxbury Helping Duxbury campaign this past weekend led to a successful trip Monday to deliver two carloads of donations to relief efforts.

"We were surprised we could collect so much so quickly," Dave Hannon, a West Roxbury resident, said. "I think people are generous and want to help out."

Hannon said he wanted to help when he read that some towns are literally cut off due to flooded bridges and roads and that one of those towns was Duxbury, Vt. The Winooski River had swelled fast and caused major damage to the residents of 19 homes in a trailer park, among other areas.

Sunday, Hannon and his wife picked up two carloads of supplies from the McDonald & Wood Sotheby's International Realty on Washington Street. Donna Wood had generously agreed to let them use the office as the local drop-off point over the weekend.

That night, they drove the supplies up to a friend's house in New Hampshire and loaded them into one van for the trip up to Duxbury, Vt. They drove to Duxbury to drop the donations off at the town offices Monday.

Town officials had set up the town garage as a staging area for donations. Relief efforts in Duxbury, Vt., are being coordinated through the town's historical society. Hannon said volunteers participating in relief efforts in Vermont were extremely appreciative and eagerly unloaded the donations. He said they were happy to hear they had some raincoats and paper items, as well as food and clothing.

"The volunteers literally gave Doris and I a round of applause as we were leaving, as they were very, very appreciative of our efforts," he said. "They even posted a 'thank you' on their town website after we left."

After talking with the volunteers for a few minutes, however, they quickly realized the work is really only beginning. He said they're still trying to rebuild their homes.

"The truth is, many of the residents in the area are ripping their flood-damaged homes down to the studs, removing flood-damaged sheetrock, insulation, carpet and belongings," he said. "What they need most right now is building supplies and help hanging new sheetrock. They need sheetrock screws, tape, paint, supplies, etc."

After they left the town garage, they volunteered in neighboring Waterbury, packing up some lunches that were being delivered to families that lost appliances and food in the floods. As they drove around, they saw house after house, business after business, with all of their flood-damaged items on the lawn.

They saw everything from furniture to stoves to toys covered in mud to lawn mowers that looked as if they'd been pulled out of a river; family after family cleaning out their belongings - ripping their homes apart, running fans trying to dry things out. Many of the businesses in the area are closed due to flood damage.

While they made a successful trip, Hannon said he hopes this is just the start of their efforts. He said he hopes officials in the two towns can connect and coordinate a more formal "sister town" donation program.

To donate to Duxbury, Vt., directly for relief efforts and check out the special thanks to Duxbury, Mass., visit www.duxburyvermont.org.



Doris Chow-Hannon, right, and her husband, Dave Hannon, initiated Duxbury Helping Duxbury and delivered needed goods Monday to volunteers participating in relief efforts in Duxbury, Vt. PHOTO/COURTESY OF DAVE HANNON



This Duxbury, Vt., garage is a staging area for donations.



The Hannons saw many homes like this one in the Duxbury and Waterbury, Vt., area.